

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

October 2002



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Labor force reductions generally follow seasonal trends

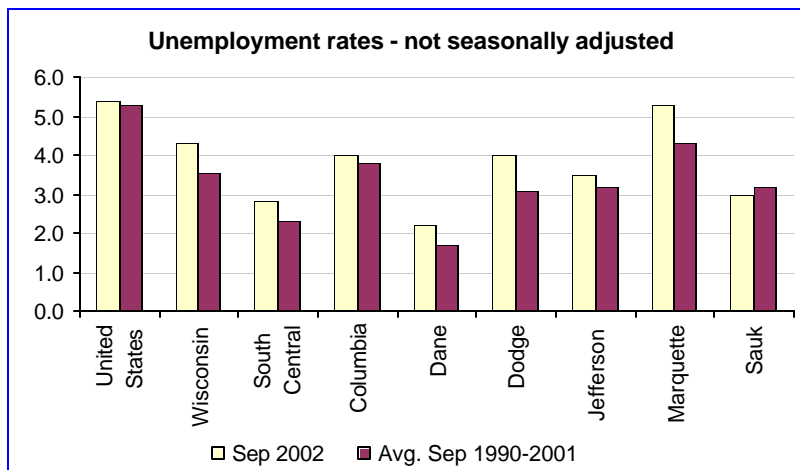
Between August and September, the national unemployment rate fell from 5.7 percent to 5.4 percent, the statewide rate fell from 4.8 percent to 4.3 percent and the South Central Wisconsin rate fell from 3.1 percent to 2.8 percent. Except Sauk County, all South Central counties still endure unemployment rates higher than the average of the unemployment rates for each September in 1990 to 2001. (See graph below.) Dodge County was the only one in the area to report a lower unemployment rate this September than last.

The graph on the second page shows that the South Central region as a whole and three individual counties saw sharper unemployment rate declines than they typically do in September. Some of the areas reporting greater-than-average unemployment rate declines in September reported smaller-than-average unemployment rate declines in August (Wisconsin, the South Central region, Columbia, Dane and Jefferson). Some of the declines reported in September may be declines that are usually reported in August. Contrary to local trends, the United States as a whole reported larger-than-average unemployment rate declines in both August and September.

The labor force numbers in the table below reflect a few predictable seasonal trends. Dane County sees the highest concentration of students leaving the labor force. Many recreational and retail establishments in Sauk County rely on high school and college students for summer help and families with younger students for their customer base, so when school resumes, their demand for labor and supply of labor drop sharply. The payroll employment estimates on the second page show these trends in greater detail.

When students return to their colleges or primary and secondary schools, so do many workers who lack year-round contracts (e.g. bus drivers, work study participants, food service and cleaning). Most of these show up in the government employment sector, where every South Central county saw its largest September employment increase.

Sauk County's September decline in retail jobs was slightly steeper than usual and Dane County's September retail job gain was slightly softer than usual. Columbia County's drop in retail jobs was less than usual and Jefferson County's was more than usual.

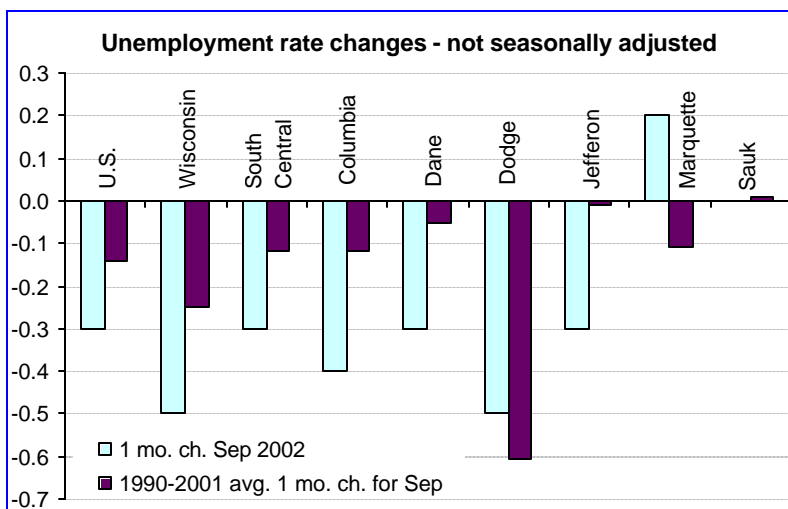


## Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

September 2002 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
<b>September 2002</b>								
Civilian Labor Force*	3,050,200	449,300	280,400	29,200	49,200	43,600	7,600	39,300
Employed	2,919,600	436,800	274,100	28,000	47,200	42,100	7,200	38,200
Unemployed	130,600	12,500	6,300	1,170	1,970	1,520	400	1,170
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.3	2.8	2.2	4.0	4.0	3.5	5.3	3.0
<b>Change From August 2002</b>								
Civilian Labor Force*	-41,100	-6,100	-2,200	-590	-310	-1,060	-110	-1,750
Employed	-24,500	-4,700	-1,530	-450	-30	-860	-120	-1,690
Unemployed	-16,600	-1,370	-700	-140	-280	-200	10	-60
Unemployment Rate (%)	-0.5	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3	0.2	0.0
<b>Change From September 2001</b>								
Civilian Labor Force*	69,300	11,300	7,600	940	230	580	250	1,720
Employed	51,100	9,500	6,100	780	440	450	200	1,440
Unemployed	18,200	1,880	1,470	160	-210	130	50	280
Unemployment Rate (%)	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	-0.4	0.3	0.5	0.6

\* Includes participants residing in area. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers, results are rounded.

As the building season started to wind down, it is not surprising to find fewer construction jobs in September than August. In relation to their own construction industries, Columbia and Marquette suffered sharper construction employment declines than usual, but they constitute a smaller segment of the region's construction market. Perhaps more concerning for the construction market is that Dane County, which provides over half the region's construction jobs, reported a thousand fewer of them this September than last.



As a region, South Central Wisconsin experienced smaller manufacturing losses than usual in September, but

these followed smaller-than-average gains during the summer. The two most manufacturing-oriented counties in the region, Dodge and Jefferson, reported fewer manufacturing jobs than they have in any September since 1994. Jefferson County manufacturing employment estimates have been below trend for much of this year. Dodge has had a bumpy ride, but at least can claim positive manufacturing job growth since May. Jefferson has reported manufacturing job losses nine of the last twelve months.

Starting in December, new County Profiles available at [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/cp\\_pdf/cp\\_mainx.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/cp_pdf/cp_mainx.htm)

#### Payroll employment estimates - not seasonally adjusted

September 2002 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
<b>September 2002</b>								
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	2,856,100	439,800	299,500	22,500	36,200	37,800	4,000	39,800
Construction & Mining	135,700	20,800	13,300	1,110	2,400	1,240	320	2,400
Manufacturing	572,200	69,300	30,400	6,000	12,500	11,400	1,210	7,700
Transport & Public Util.	133,200	15,100	10,500	690	1,360	1,460	90	1,060
Wholesale Trade	137,200	17,200	12,100	770	1,070	1,340	110	1,830
Retail Trade	508,700	77,200	51,000	4,500	5,100	7,400	710	8,500
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	153,600	27,400	24,000	430	810	850	110	1,170
Services	809,400	119,200	84,100	5,200	7,400	10,000	680	11,800
Government	406,100	93,700	74,100	3,800	5,500	4,000	750	5,500
<b>Change From August 2002</b>								
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	3,600	-130	1,880	-390	230	-430	120	-1,540
Construction & Mining	-3,200	-900	-630	-60	-50	-50	-20	-100
Manufacturing	-5,100	-280	-110	-50	90	-170	10	-40
Transport & Public Util.	3,400	320	220	20	70	-20	0	30
Wholesale Trade	-1,180	-170	-130	0	0	-10	0	-40
Retail Trade	-6,200	-650	340	-220	-10	-280	-20	-460
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	-1,110	-250	-220	-10	-10	10	0	-20
Services	-4,000	-2,700	-600	-270	-240	-140	-40	-1,450
Government	21,000	4,500	3,000	200	370	230	190	530
<b>Change From September 2001</b>								
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	-2,500	11,400	9,500	960	-510	-320	-50	1,780
Construction & Mining	510	-1,020	-1,020	40	90	-20	-60	-50
Manufacturing	-46,700	-2,700	-810	250	-1,200	-1,230	-10	280
Transport & Public Util.	-3,500	210	290	-70	100	-130	-10	30
Wholesale Trade	-1,420	-550	-520	-10	-40	-70	10	70
Retail Trade	4,600	1,790	850	50	150	270	-40	510
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	5,200	2,100	2,100	-40	-20	40	10	40
Services	30,300	8,700	6,800	500	70	660	30	650
Government	8,400	2,800	1,840	240	340	160	10	240

\*\*Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers, results rounded.

**Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi).**

Direct questions and comments to: Dan Barroilhet, Labor Market Economist  
Dane County Job Center, 1819 Aberg Avenue, Suite C, Madison, WI 53704  
Telephone: (608) 242-4885; Email: [dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us)